



Western Europe Prayer Diary December & January 2022



Isaiah 40v1 -2

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem and cry to her that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned.....”

Already the first Sunday of Advent is past. What does Advent mean? It means the glory of the coming of the Lord. The world is blundering along in a morass of sin and sorrow. People have their personal problems too. It may seem that God has forgotten us, but we praise God for the message of Advent, a message of comfort.

The Call to Comfort

The Advent gospel has an urgency to it. Men and women need to be shaken awake from their spiritual lethargy. However, it also speaks of peace and comfort. This call to comfort is summed up in Jesus' own invitation given in Matthew 11v28, *“Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* It's not sentimentalism. Author, James S.

Stewart, says *“the true comfort of Christ is a strong, bracing, reinforcing thing.....it is like the gift of a job to a man who has been years out of work. It is like the clasp of a friend's hand in a time of need.”*

Isaiah knew that Jerusalem needed comfort. Her chequered history had brought its share of weeping and bitterness. Then comes Isaiah's message heralding in a new dawn, *“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.”*

Comfort then, Comfort now

That note of comfort was needed then: is it not needed now? Can you imagine God looking down on the human scene? What must God be feeling as he sees all the wreckage of broken human hope? Surely the writer of Psalm 103 v13 knew the answer to this question, *“As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear Him.”*

But God doesn't simply deal with humanity in the mass. Advent has an individual message for me.

Comfort Me

Anywhere people are gathered there will be all manner of troubled spirits. People are facing temptations they've never been able to tell others about. Many souls need comfort today. Advent brings each individual comfort when we stop to reflect on what the Advent means for every individual – the Son from heaven, breaking into human history, bringing men and women to God. What greater comfort than this.

Let me Comfort Others

How do you and I view others? Surely, we who have experienced God's help and comfort will want to be a helper and a comforter. Many of us will have experienced what it is to watch a loved one suffering some terrible physical pain and cried out, "O God, *why can't I suffer this instead.*" This same compassion is the compassion that Christ felt as he looked upon men and women caught in sin that spoilt their lives and temptations they couldn't break. And so, He died to free them.

The Compassionate Christ

When you see the compassionate Christ, you see God. That's the message of Advent, "Immanuel, *God with us.*" The reality of Immanuel is that where human comfort ends God begins. Others may not even be able to understand your circumstances. However, God is both with you and in you.

Of course, God offers us the greatest comfort through Christ, the forgiveness of our sins. To have a conscience at peace with God and a heart that is clean from sin is the greatest comfort any of us can know. The greatest comfort for Jerusalem is in chapter 40 v 2, "*her iniquity is pardoned.*" It must have sounded too good to be true. All is forgiven.

Are you struggling with defeat today? Things have happened that ought never to have happened. Like the exiled Jews in Babylon, there is a barrier separating you from God. Then hear the thrilling, comforting message of Advent, "*My son, my daughter, that is all past now, and done with and finished forever. Every barrier broken down by the love of Christ.*"

Stephen Garrett

1. Christmas Together

Pray that despite the growing COVID-19 incidents we will still be able to do the Christmas Together workshops and Christmas Clubs as planned. Pray that many volunteers will do more than just one club and that many local churches will reach out to those who have never heard the gospel.

2. Partnership Ministry Department, CEF Europe

We have updated the European site www.everychildineurope.com and it is now possible to donate online. Please pray that this will be a useful tool in raising support for Christmas Together projects this month, but also other vital projects in the future. Pray for each Christmas Together project to be fully funded and result in many more children hearing the Gospel across Europe!

3. Leadership Development Department, CEF Europe

Philip is really thankful for a wonderful time of blessing and encouragement as he taught and shared God's Word with the CEF Poland team at their recent workers retreat, and autumn church day conference. Praise God for this.

4. Estonia

Pray for many more children to find avastajad.net site and visit the Christmas calendar each day with the new message. Praise the Lord for the Wondersurf team in Estonia.

5. Lithuania

Praise the Lord for 6 teachers who give up their Tuesday evenings for the "Teaching the preschoolers" course in Kaunas. Pray that they would start preschool ministry after the course finishes in the 1st week of December.

6. Great Britain

Pray for the Great Britain team as we meet for prayer with the CEF team in the Netherlands this morning, that God would encourage us, and hear and answer our prayers for each another.

7. Denmark

Please pray that God will help us with some planned Christmas events in a difficult area today and on the 9th.

8. Finland

Thank God for the new Christmas booklet *Best Celebration Ever*. We have received positive feedback. Please pray that children will understand the simple presentation of the gospel message we have written into the booklet and receive salvation as a result!

9. Spain

This month we finished our second TCE1 online. We pray that the 32 students who have taken this course will open Good News Clubs in their neighbourhoods or churches.

10. Iulian Mangalagiu, Assistant Regional Director:

As we look back in 2021, we want to praise God for his goodness and faithfulness. We couldn't do what we had done without his help. We are also thankful for our partners who served along with us in the ministry of reaching children. To God be the glory.

11. The Netherlands

CityKids Ghent, Flanders. Pray for the Christmas club Anneke Breet and Marco Baan would like to organize in a school. Pray that children will come, and we will have a good time together.

12. France

Praise the Lord for all the children who participated in the zoom clubs and for the 500 new families contacted.

13. Lithuania

Praise the Lord for churches willing to reach kids during this Christmas season. Pray for a clear Gospel presentation and for the salvation of boys and girls.

14. Ireland

We are amazed and so thankful for the support of the Christian public in giving towards the rebuilding of our new Seaview Camp and Conference Centre. This centre is a wonderful testament to the faithfulness of our God. We look forward to many children, young people and church groups making use of these

15. Norwegian Lapland

We praise God that about 30 children now come to the GNC in Lakselv. Please pray that more will come to the weekly Clubs in Billefjord and Børselv. Pray too that the JYC in Karasjok will get going again and that young teens will come.

16. Stephen & Grace Chambers, Area Directors, NW Europe

As we heard about many organising Christmas events across NW Europe we were challenged about doing something in our own church. Pray for us on Saturday 18th December as we have a Shop and Drop Christmas club. Pray many children will come to hear the gospel and enjoy time together. Also pray that our very supportive church family will get a better idea of what Christmas Together across Europe could really mean for the children.

17. Stephen & Pam Garrett, Area Directors, SW Europe

Praise God for the sale of the Camp Centre in Belgium. Please pray that Stephen may know wisdom as he considers the need to go to Belgium during December to finalise the paperwork needed to disband the camp ASBL (non-profit association.) Ask God to give protection for this trip if it takes place, possibly today or tomorrow.

18. Education Department, CEF Europe

We are so thankful for God's help as we have worked on updating the Teach Others Also Seminars. Soon the new design and layout work will need to begin. Join with us in praying for someone who has skills in doing text layout work in Microsoft Word to help during the months of January – April 2022 so that this project can be completed and made available to CEF teams around Europe.

19. Germany

Looking back on 2021 we praise the Lord for improved online activities but also that since the summer we could reach many children face to face. We also praise Him for the faithfulness of our donors during the whole Corona time.

20. Belgium

Please pray that the Board may be given great wisdom as they disperse the funds from the sale of Camp Beho. Ask that God will guide so that help can be given to other struggling countries and used to establish a full-time National Director to develop the ministry in the country.

21. Stephen & Grace Chambers, Area Directors, NW Europe

Praise God for the time in Spain at Western Connections Conference. I know we asked prayer for this in the previous prayer calendar and the Lord really answered. Pray the time would have been a real blessing to all who could attend and pray that the recorded talks will now also be a blessing to many who could not attend in person

22. Great Britain

Praise God that **Liz** has had opportunities to teach a Good News Club in Porthcawl. Pray that she and her husband Micha enjoy safe travel home to Switzerland for Christmas and return in January to discover more of what God has in store for them in Bridgend, South Wales.

23. Norwegian Lapland

In the new year we hope to have a TCE 1. pray we will get several to take part in this. Pray for all the preparation necessary.

24. Denmark

Please pray for Dorte who is sharing the Christmas message in a Christmas service for unchurched families in a state church.

25. Gerd-Walter Buskies, European Director

If the Corona situation allows, I'm preaching in my home church tomorrow and would appreciate your prayers that God would touch hearts through His Word.

26. Stephen & Pam Garrett, Area Directors, SW Europe

Praise God for safe travels given to Stephen during October and November, to Spain, Italy, Portugal and Netherlands despite covid restrictions.

27. Latvia

Pray that God will guide us as to how best we can continue to do our ministry in view of recent changes made in the laws of the country.

28. Italy

Please pray for the literature project planned by the UEB (CEF Italy) literature group for 2022. Ask God to use the project to encourage children to reach children. Also pray for the funds needed to print and distribute 50,000 copies of the booklet containing the wristband with the Wordless Book colours.

29. Germany

The team of CEF Munich has developed a 5-part video project on the Wordless Book. Please pray that many children will understand the gospel truths and will believe in Jesus as a result.

30. Portugal

Praise God for the recent worker's retreat in November during which it was possible to finalise a 3 year strategic ministry plan for the country. Ask God to help as this plan is implemented beginning in 2022.

31. Spain

We are very aware and thankful for how God has taken care of the CEF Spain team throughout this year. He has protected us from the virus, cared for us in all our activities, cared for our families, and continues to provide for ministry. Glory to God.

1. Partnership Ministry, CEF Europe

Praise God for His faithfulness and for each person who gave for CEF Europe – praise God for children and adults who said that they gave because “God told them to give” or because “they really want children to hear the Gospel”. May God continue to burden hearts to support the ministry in 2022 too!

2. Finland

Training is moving into shorter and more compact units. We have just a few instructors left, most of them are volunteers working full time somewhere else. Please pray for us as we put together a variety of one day or half a day training packages according to the needs of the teachers in Finland.

3. Spain

We thank God that for several months we have been able to start activities with teenagers in different parts of Spain. They are young people who had started in Good News Clubs a good number of years ago.

4. France

A national priority in the next 2-3 years will be to integrate new and young workers into the team. Let us pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out labourers.

5. Iulian Mangalagiu, Assistant Regional Director:

We are now registering a new association in Romania and plan to move some of the responsibilities of the European HQ to the new office. Pray that we will know God's guidance and help.

6. Germany

One of our biggest requests for this year is the autumn CMLC. Please pray for the preparation, the students of God's choice (also from Austria and Switzerland) and new workers as a result in all the German speaking countries.

7. Estonia

Please pray for a good number of participants for a TCE-2 course starting in the second half of January.

8. Great Britain

Pray today and on the 15th for the National Committee as they review the ministry of the past 12 months, plan for the future and implement the objectives of the 7 areas of our strategic plan with action plans to strengthen and support the workers to reach more girls and boys with the Gospel of the Lord Jesus.

Leadership Development Department, CEF Europe

Please pray that God will guide us and give us good ideas as we begin to write and create new training resources to help develop and strengthen the National Boards across Europe.

9. Stephen & Grace Chambers, Area Directors, NW Europe

Please pray in 2022 for the target countries of Norway, Iceland, Switzerland and Austria especially. Pray for ongoing work on websites and promotional material to be effective and for contacts to be made who will be interested in attending CMLC and coming into the work.

10. Denmark

Please pray for Iris Dampe, a new local worker who will begin working full time with CEF Denmark today.

11. Education Department, CEF Europe

Today the European Education team will be meeting to pray and plan. Pray that God will give us a clear vision and much wisdom as we consider the year ahead and what He would have us do.

12. Lithuania

Praise the Lord for each and every ministry partner who prays for our ministry, who shares their finances so we can minister and who gives their time and talents for CEF ministry in Lithuania. Pray that God would bless them during the New year of 2022.

13. Belgium

Praise God for the help of CEF in the Netherlands to build up contact with the churches in the city of Ghent in Flanders. Please pray that from these contacts there may be someone who can become a full-time worker amongst the Flemish speaking population of Belgium.

14. Stephen & Pam Garrett, Area Directors, SW Europe

Praise God for the opportunity to make a visit to Greece who have recently joined the South West Area. Ask God to help Stephen to be a blessing to the directors, workers, and board in CEF Greece during the trip which is planned to coincide with the worker's retreat planned for today until the 16th.

15. Spain

Pray for the promotion of the CMLC in 2022/2023. We have 14 people interested in doing this course and we will continue visiting different theological seminaries and churches in the coming months. May God prepare the hearts of the people who should attend this course.

16. Ireland

We plan to conduct a CMLC in Ireland later this year. Pray that God will send the students of His choosing. Perhaps some of these believers will be called by God to serve in Ireland.

17. Gerd-Walter Buskies, European Director

Please pray for the ELAG (European Leadership Advisory Group) meetings this week. After nearly 2 years of online meetings, we plan to meet in Ireland if possible (otherwise online). The agenda is always full and the meeting days sometimes long. We need wisdom, guidance, and strength from the Lord to understand His will and what is best for the ministry in Europe. Thanks for your prayers.

18. Germany

Please pray for the literature development and production team (Manfred & Monika, Annegret, Peter and a number of volunteers) as they translate the Wonder Devotional Book year 3, develop preschool material and publish a quarterly magazine. Pray also that we can buy the needed paper and other supplies for the press, which sometimes is a challenge at present. Also pray for Markus and Susanne as they serve our customers and ship literature to many places in Germany and other countries.

19. The Netherlands

Marius and Marco are invited today to teach for a full day at the part time Filadelfia Bible school in Flanders, Belgium. Pray that God will use the teaching to promote the vision and that people as a result will reach out to the children with the Gospel.

20. Bogdan Bassara, International Literature Director

Thank the Lord for the gifted writers, artists, graphic designers, printers, translators and proof readers He has given CEF Europe. Please pray for more co-workers, so the Equipping ministry will continue to grow in 2022.

21. Great Britain

Pray for the CEF workers in Britain as they prepare to teach the "**Equip**" online foundational training course to three more cohorts of individuals and churches from different parts of Britain to help train more to serve in children's ministry.

22. Gerd-Walter Buskies, European Director

Please pray for the online meeting with the German Board in the morning and afternoon that the Lord will guide in every decision.

23. Denmark

Please pray for a new board member for the national board.

24. Education Department, CEF Europe

An instructor level course will begin today online for CEF workers who are preparing to teach the Pre-school Teacher's Course. Pray especially for Estera, Joanna and Doina as they teach. Pray that technology will work well throughout the duration of this course (until 3 February).

25. Gerd-Walter Buskies, European Director

Gerd-Walter and Iulian are preparing over these months for a smooth transition in leadership. Please pray for them as they have many meetings together, and that Iulian will be well prepared when he takes over European Directorship on May 1.

26. Portugal

Please pray that God will provide a full-time worker for the North of the country. There has not been a full-time worker in this area for about 15 years. However, there are still many individual and church contacts in the North of Portugal.

27. Italy

Praise God for the provision of finance from donors to help meet the end of year financial requirements faced by CEF Italy in December.

28. Latvia

Please begin to pray for preparations that we will start to make for our summer camp ministry.

29. Stephen & Pam Garrett, Area Directors, SW Europe

Please pray for the development of the South West Europe Team. Pray particularly for the complete recovery of Andrew McMullan following major surgery in November. Ask God that he and Beulah can soon be fully immersed in the ministry of the area once again without any distractions.

30. Christmas Together

Please pray that the children who heard the Christmas message during the Christmas Together outreach will have received it well, and understood the meaning. Pray that the Lord will have called many into His Kingdom, in Europe and around the world.

31. CEF Europe

Preparation for the CEF European Conference is well underway. We trust the Lord that the conference will be possible from April 27 to May 2 in Germany. Pray that Philip Annett and his

team will get all the necessary plans into place, and that the Conference will be unforgettable and a great blessing for our workers and countries across Europe.